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Florence to Jim, 5 June 1963

(Author Unknown)

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1900 Lamont St., N. W. #202
Washington 10, D. C.
June 5, 1963

Dear Jim,

I don't think I ever answered your letter of last Fall. I was glad to hear that you were still in one piece, and I hope there won't be a repeat performance of last year's fracas. (On that we, at least, agree).

Life has been quietly pleasant for me here. I've been writing - and selling - for the confessions market. They pay pretty well: \$150. for a 5,000 story, which is three cents a word. They're the last of the old pulp markets, which makes me a little nostalgic. Nowadays, people don't just want to sit down and read a good story -- they've got to learn great things painlessly. Exit Faith Baldwin and Fannie Hurst, (two of my favorites) but I hope, not me. I handled the publicity for the Ojike Memorial Medical Center in Nigeria, thanks to a psychoanalyst for whom I work part time. He knows Dr. Edward Mazique, the Negro doctor in D. C. who is active in Afro-American relations. It gave me a chance to try my hand (successfully-The Wash. Post printed it) at non-fiction and press releases. After the complexities of plotting and character development, article writing is simple. As soon as I get myself a good camera, I'll do more articles.

I also sold a story to St. Joseph's Magazine, which is the Catholic Redbook, or thereabouts. It will be out in July. I'll try to send you a copy. If you see Father Walter Maloney, tell him about it, would you? I know he'd be pleased.

I wonder if Carbone is running for Pope again? He lost by a hair last time, poor man. What we need now after all that benevolence is a good dose of malevolence -- a real, rip-snortin' Medici.

You'll be dismayed to know that I'm a paragon of free enterprise. I never know what I'll have to live on until I go to the mailbox. Free-lancing can be rough, but what a delight to find a check in the box! Beer n' beans or bourbon ~~and~~ n' steak. I do get a few wages from my psychoanalyst, though I don't have a regular working schedule ~~and~~ with him -- just when he needs me to do typing, etc. Between the two, though, I manage to get along fairly well. I have a little cat, who is a complete egomaniac, won't eat anything but swordfish steak and cream, so I have responsibilities to spur me on.

I haven't heard from Jane, though I sent her a Christmas present. I suppose she's in one of her voodoo priestess moods. There's simply nothing to do but wait until she runs out of pins.

I object to the cartoons showing Miss. and Ala. state policemen in open-collar, wrinkled, cracker-style uniforms. I realize the climate necessitates that they wear shirt-sleeves, but I always remember them as ~~being~~ being very spiffy, as my Cockney father would say. If you want to see a sad scene, you should compare the White House cops to the Buckingham Palace guards. I've always thought that Marines in dress

blues should guard the White House, weather be damned. I remember seeing a WH guard wave at FDR one day years ago. The cop was leaning up against the box with a cigarette dangling from his mouth. My father came home and got drunk and sang Rule Britannia until the neighbors banged on the walls. If there's anything I love, it's spit and polish and lots of schmaltz.

Since I've been writing I've become very mail-conscious. I hope you will write me and tell me all of your news, too. I often think of Dr. Marquette, who was so nice to me. Tell him hello, won't you? I'm going to write to him, too, but in the meantime, this letter is for both of you.

Take care of yourself and give my best to your wife, and do write soon.

Best wishes,

Flourence